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A Neglected Memoir of Mark Twain

LAWRENCE BERKOVE

Salad Days of Mark Twain

DAN DE QUILLE

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A Neglected Memoir of Mark Twain

An Introduction by Lawrence Berkove to
Dan De Quille's "Salad Days of Mark Twain"

Salad Days of Mark Twain" is a reminiscence that Dan De Quille (pen name of William L. Wright) wrote toward the end of his career. For over thirty years, he had worked as a reporter for the *Territorial Enterprise* of Virginia City, Nevada, one of the most famous papers of the Old West. While others mined the Comstock lode of its fortunes in silver, De Quille was content to earn a modest living mining the community, reporting on its doings, its ups and its downs. In 1876 he had published his one significant book about the region, *The Big Bonanza*. It was indifferently successful in its own time, although it is now recognized as a classic account of the Comstock operations and the natural and social history of the area. Soon afterward, the Comstock production began what turned out to be a fatal decline, and the towns in the area began to lose population. De Quille remained with the *Enterprise* until it finally closed down in 1893. It would have been unnatural if De Quille, who so loved life on the Comstock, had not penned some commemorative tributes to it. What he wrote were not epitaphs but happy recollections of its colorful vitality.

Early in 1893, in rapid succession, he composed three reminiscences of notable people he had known in the exciting days when the Comstock

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was booming. "Salad Days of Mark Twain" was one, and "Reporting with Mark Twain"¹ and "Artemus Ward in Nevada"² were the other two. The latter are familiar at least to Twain scholars; they were published in journals and have been relatively accessible. The first – and earliest of the three – was written as a Sunday feature article for the *San Francisco Examiner*,³ but since then it has been neither well-known nor readily available. I am aware of only two reprintings since 1893. The first one was in the 22 April 1910 issue of the *Denver Rocky Mountain News* but its text was slightly altered and some typographical errors were introduced. In 1971, Oscar Lewis anthologized the article but this second reprinting was in a book with a limited edition of 500.⁴ Until the present occasion, therefore, "Salad Days of Mark Twain" has remained largely unread and unused.

The piece is rich in details and captures for a few moments a sense of "the many congenial excitements in which Virginia City then abounded," excitements which made it a special place for Artemus Ward and even inspired Adah Isaacs Menken to consider settling down in it. Even after thirty years, De Quille was still moved by the magic spell of those days with Mark Twain when "we were both young . . . and the world seemed young and teeming to overflowing with wealth," and one can understand why Twain, in an 1863 letter to his mother and sister, scorned aspiring to a place on some big San Francisco daily: "No paper in the United States can afford to pay me what my place on the 'Enterprise' is worth. . . . I fare like a prince wherever I go."⁵

It is generally agreed that Twain's *Enterprise* years were the ones when his literary genius was first given full rein and constructive direction. He was twenty-seven when he joined the paper, it was his first full-time job as a writer, and he was both sensitive and impressionable. It was fortunate that he met De Quille. De Quille was six years older than Twain, more experienced, and regarded by many of their contemporaries to be the better writer of the two. Many scholars have adjudged De Quille to have had an important influence during those years on Twain's writing style. It is clear that however De Quille served as a tutor to Twain, he did so in a gentle and natural way, and never awed or intimidated Twain as did

that earlier tutor in the ways of the Mississippi River, the pilot Horace Bixby.

While "Salad Days of Mark Twain" may not be a major memoir of Twain it is a valuable one. De Quille and Twain were not only colleagues on the *Enterprise*, but also close friends and roommates. De Quille, therefore, is a prime source of information about this formative period of Twain's life. Further, De Quille enjoys a reputation for honesty and accuracy of detail. Although some of the episodes recollected in "Salad Days" are touched upon in the other two memoirs and elsewhere, De Quille did not really repeat himself. It is a unique memoir and worthy of enhanced availability.

FOOTNOTES

1. Dan De Quille, "Artemus Ward in Nevada," *The Californian*, IV (August 1893), 403-406.
2. Dan De Quille, "Reporting with Mark Twain," *California Illustrated* (July 1893), 170-178.
3. Dan De Quille, "Salad Days of Mark Twain," *San Francisco Examiner*, 19 March 1893, p. 13.
4. Dan De Quille, "Salad Days of Mark Twain." In *The Life and Times of the Virginia City Territorial Enterprise: Being Reminiscences of Five Distinguished Comstock Journalists*. Ed. Oscar Lewis. Ashland: Lewis Osborne, 1971, pp. 37-52.
5. To Jane and Pamela Clemens, 19 August 1893, *Mark Twain's Letters*, ed. Albert Bigelow Paine (New York: Harper & Bros., 1917), I, 91-92.



Salad Days of Mark Twain

DAN DE QUILLE

The Comstock was young when I first met Mark Twain in the editorial rooms of the *Territorial Enterprise* in Virginia City. We were both young then, and the world seemed young and teeming to overflowing with wealth. The whole country was booming, and the *Enterprise* was booming equally with all else. It was undoubtedly at the time the most flourishing newspaper on the Pacific Coast. A tidal wave of gold rolled in upon its proprietors. The paper seemed to run itself – and in doing so ran all connected with it. It seemed to take the lead and go right along without thought or care on the part of anyone. All there was to do was to pile into the paper all the news it would hold. The money to pay for everything seemed to besiege the office.

Mark Twain and I were employed in the local department of the *Enterprise*, and there was no lack of matters of interest in our line. Improvements of all kinds, new discoveries in the mines, accidents, cutting and shooting affrays, fires and all manner of exciting events crowded themselves upon us. However, we went merrily along, joking and laughing, and never feeling the weight of the work we were doing in the whirl and excitement of the times.

Soon after we began working together Mark and I rented two rooms on the second floor of a large brick building on B street erected by R. M. Daggett and his partner, W. F. Meyers, the well-known operator in mining stocks. We had a large bedroom and a somewhat smaller room for use as a parlor or sitting room.

Joseph T. Goodman, editor and one-third owner of the *Enterprise*,

bossed the job of furnishing these rooms, and piled into them several hundred dollars' worth of stuff. Mark said that as Goodman had been "so keen to do the ordering" of the things, we'd "just let him foot the bill." So, whenever the furniture man – good old Moses Goldman – came after us with his bill, we laughed at him, and referred him to Goodman. But one day old Moses sued us and we had to square up with him. Mark said we might have known better than to try such a trick with "a man whose front name was Moses and whose rear name was Goldman."

However, we had a huge double bed, piles of bedding, splendid carpets and fine fittings of all kinds. This, in comparison with the bunks in which we roosted in an old tumble-down shed when I first began work on the *Enterprise*, was quite palatial.

Mark and I agreed well as room-mates. Both wanted to read and smoke about the same length of time after getting into bed, and if one got hungry and got up to go down town for oysters the other also became hungry and turned out.

We had in the building where we roomed a very agreeable and jolly lot of people. Tom Fitch, the "Silver Tongued," his wife, sister-in-law and mother-in-law occupied a large suite of rooms just across the hall from us and were the best of neighbors. Often when Mark and I got home at night we found laid out for us in our rooms a fine spread of pie, cake, milk and the like. Mrs. Fitch's mince pies were perfection.

Envious reporters of other papers did not scruple to assert that we stole all these good things out of the Fitch pantry. We denied the charge, but it was labor lost. Worse than this was their story of our having hanged the pet cat of Tom's mother-in-law. It was said that we tied a cord about the neck of the cat and suspended it from a rear second-story window. As the good old lady had actually lost her cat, she was a little sour with us for a few days. It afterward appeared that R. M. Daggett, who was a great friend of the Fitch family, knew of the old lady's loss, and put reporters of the other papers up to publishing a sensational story on the "Secret Midnight Hanging." The explanation in the last line or two that the victim was a cat, made it all the worse for us with the old lady. For about a fortnight mince pies did not flow in upon us.

A good deal has been said first and last of the stealing of Tom Fitch's firewood while Mark and I were rooming at the Daggett & Meyers building. Tom never lost much wood through us, but the boys would always have it otherwise. Wood was something of an object in those days, as in winter it sometimes boomed up to \$40 a cord. We were in the habit of buying of the Chinese wood-peddlers by the donkey load. One bitterly cold night we found ourselves without wood. In the hall on the same floor stood Tom's well filled wood box. Said Mark: "We are not going to freeze in here with plenty of wood just outside our door," and out he went and gathered up an armful of Tom's wood. Coming back to our door he threw a stick of wood upon the floor and made a great racket. This was to arouse Tom. Then, opening the door with a bang, he faced about in it as if he had just come from the inside and sang out in an angry tone, as though to me in the hall: "Dan, d--n it all, don't be taking Tom's wood! It ain't right, and wood so confounded high! It ain't a nice thing to do. Now take that wood right back or there'll be trouble!"

He then went back to the wood box and made a big racket, but when he threw down one stick he picked up two, and presently he came into the room with wood piled up to his chin. This he put down so carefully that the sticks wouldn't have broken an egg. We soon had a rousing fire and wood to spare for the morning.

There was plenty of such fun in those times. A trick of outsiders was to place all manner of things in our rooms, the doors of which were never locked. Mark had a Japanese sword. One night when we got home we were startled to find standing before us a gigantic fellow who seemed in the dim light of an open window to threaten us with a drawn sword. The invader proved to be a huge dummy armed with Mark's sword. Of course it was expected we would turn loose upon the giant with our pistols. Luckily, however, we hailed the intruder, offering him a chance for his life, and by doing so discovered the hoax.

Occasionally buckets of water greeted us upon the opening of our door, and at times hidden bells and clappers were ringing and rapping half the night, while we searched in vain for the secret wires and strings.

An institution that was very popular for a time in 1863-64 among

Comstock young men of leisure was a fencing school and gymnasium opened by M. Chauvel, a French restaurant keeper. Although he taught only fencing and the use of the broadsword, M. Chauvel kept a supply of boxing gloves for the accommodation of those who had a leaning toward the "manly art."

M. Chauvel's school was most liberally patronized by the reporters and editors of the newspapers then published in Virginia City. For an hour or two every afternoon this class of customers took possession of the gymnasium and several pairs of them were to be seen at it hammer and tongs with foils, broadswords and boxing gloves.

Mark Twain, Joe Goodman and some of the rest of us cared little for anything but fencing, and upon entering the gymnasium went at once for the foils; whereas Dennis McCarthy, Steve Gillis and several others immediately appropriated the boxing gloves.

The boxing was decidedly rough sport compared with the foils - "your stoccado, your imbrocata, your passada and your montanto," as set forth by Captain Bobadil. [*Every Man in His Humor.*]

Twain became quite an expert with the foils. In attack he was fiery and particularly dangerous for the reason that one could not watch his eyes, which he habitually wears about half closed. In defense he was not so good and would nearly always give ground when hotly pressed.

Among the boxers was George F. Dawson, a young Englishman who was at the time assistant editor on the *Enterprise*. Boxing was his hobby, and he particularly prided himself upon being a hard hitter. If no one could be found to put on the gloves and face him he would viciously tackle the sand bag or charge across the hall and "land one straight from the shoulder" against the wall.

Dennis McCarthy, who was tall, strong, "long in the reach" and tolerably expert at boxing, was about the only newspaper man who was able to tackle Dawson, and they seldom had a set-to that did not result in anger on both sides and terminate in a wind-up that looked like a battle for blood.

One day some imp induced Mark Twain to put on a pair of boxing gloves, and with them all the airs of a knight of the prize ring. He had no

thought of boxing with anyone. Having seen more or less sparring on the stage, a good deal of amateur boxing, and probably one or two prize fights, Mark had got some of the motions. No sooner had he the gloves on than he began capering about the hall. Dawson observed his antics with astonishment not unmixed with awe. He evidently considered that they were made for his special benefit and intimidation. Perhaps he may have thought he detected Mark regarding him interrogatively from beneath his bushy brows at the end of each series of cabesal rotations. At all events, in view of Mark's movements of supposed warlike import, Dawson kept a wary eye on him, never once suspecting that the ex-Mississippi pilot was merely making a bid for his admiration.

Presently Mark squared off directly in front of Dawson and began working his right like the piston of a steam engine, at the same time stretching out his neck and gyrating his curly pate in a very astonishing manner.

Dawson took this to be a direct act of defiance – a challenge to a trial of skill that could not be ignored. Desperately, therefore, and probably not without a secret chill of fear at heart, Dawson drew off and with full force planted a heavy blow squarely upon Mark's offered nose, the latter not making the least movement toward a guard. The force of the blow fairly lifted Mark off his feet and landed him across a settle that stood against the wall on one side of the hall, when Dawson, flushed with victory, ran up and, against all rules, began punching him in the head.

Dawson was hauled off by McCarthy, Gillis and others and was sternly rebuked. There was a plentiful flow of claret and oaths as Mark staggered to his feet and began looking about for a club. He assured Dawson that the next time he undertook to entertain him it would be with a dray-pin.

With a hand and a handkerchief screening his wounded nose, Mark – "musing full sadly in his sullen mind" – took his departure for our rooms up on B street, leaving a trail of blood across the hall, up the stairs, through the restaurant above and all along his homeward route. His nose streamed blood.

An hour later I found him in our little parlor planted in front of a looking-glass. All the remainder of the day he sat there and tenderly ministered to the wants of his ailing nose.

Nothing the shelves of the apothecary contained was too good for that nose. It was indulged in towels saturated with sugar of lead and all manner of soothing lotions.

Notwithstanding the use of divers applications, Mark had a black eye and a prodigious nose. That wronged and wounded nose refused to submit to any restraining or ameliorating influence. It was a nose that need not have quailed in the presence of old Antiochus VIII, that of Mohammed, the great Frederick or Napoleon I; yet Mark was not proud of it. Mark would not venture forth to take his place at his desk until the shades of night had fallen. When he did arrive he was quite unamiable. A bear with a sore head was a lamb in comparison.

A printer who ventured into the sanctum in search of copy – gentle, amiable little William Henry Deane – seemed to be much struck by the bulbous and angry appearance of Mark's nose. He stared at the inflamed organ in big-eyed astonishment, and then cried out: "Why, Mr. Clemens, what is the matter with your nose? It looks like an egg-plant!"

"Get out of here, blast you, or I'll make you look like a corpse!" yelled Mark, grabbing a paper-weight. "No printer has a d--n bit of right to come into this room, copy or no copy!"

Little Deane immediately became an absent man.

Just at that time the mines about Silver Mountain, Alpine County, California, were attracting attention. Goodman wanted to send a reporter up to Silver Mountain to write an article on the new mines. Mark volunteered to go. He wanted to get his nose out of town. He was well known in Carson City, but by going in the stage he could smuggle his nose through that place.

No sooner was Mark away than I wrote for the *Enterprise* a description of his arrival at Silver Mountain. In this it was said that as the stage was entering the town Mark placed himself at the window of the vehicle. The alert suburban inhabitants caught sight of his nose and raised a cry that a "freak" show was coming. The man with the big nose was in the coach.

At once the people of the town dropped everything and flocked about the stage, trying to peer within as it rolled along. They asked the driver if the nose was natural and where and when the show would take place. Men and boys ran ahead to the hotel at which the coach was to stop and

took up positions in front of it. Three cheers were given as the nose was seen coming out of the stage. On his way from the coach to the hotel the supposed freak passed through a lane of admiring citizens.

An old lady who stood on the front of the veranda seemed quite fascinated by the phenomenal nose. As the owner of the nose was passing, the old dame asked permission to touch it. Being gratified in this desire she took off her spectacles, turned to the crowd and said it was the happiest moment of her life.

This was a mild and innocent squib for a Comstock newspaper in those days, but Mark said "it wasn't a d--n bit smart." He was hot about it when he got back to Virginia City. He said I had caused him to be annoyed by all the bums in Carson when he got back to that town as he was obliged to stand treat to shut their mouths.

A few days after his return to Virginia Mark got even with me. While riding on horseback my saddle turned, landing me on the ground and spraining one of my knees. That evening the bruised knee became so painful that I was obliged to go to our rooms, leaving Mark to "do the locals."

He got up a terrific story about my accident. He "concussed" me, and brought my remains into town on two drays.

Mark's notions as a nurse were rather peculiar. Coming up to our rooms to see me the evening of our accident, and finding me suffering, he went out and presently returned in triumph with an orange and a handful of cigars. He said as an orange was cooling and a cigar soothing, nothing could be better for a sprained knee.

Next morning, after looking at the *Enterprise*, I said to Mark: "Beware of the Greeks bearing gifts!"

"What is it now?" said he, trying to look innocent.

"I thought something was up last night," said I, "when you were so free with your cigars and oranges."

Mark chuckled and said: "Now, blast you, maybe you'll hereafter let my nose alone!"

But his item created greater alarm and grief in some quarters than he ever knew. It was headed "Terrible Accident to Dan De Quille," and

rent me to fragments in the most serious and businesslike manner. Now the *Enterprise* went home to my wife and people who were then in the States. The moment that my wife saw that heading she dropped the paper and raised the death-howl. Some others of the womenfolk began to read the terrible story, but sickened and threw the paper aside when they came to where my hat was pulled out of the wreck of my liver. Not until the last line of the item was it shown that the story of the accident was a fake.

Mark Twain delighted in the horrible and the shocking in those days. Not satisfied with the accidents happening in the mines, though many of them were sufficiently terrible, he would invent horrors of various kinds. These stories were generally in the way of finding human remains in out of the way places. He had a crow to pick with the Coroner, and delighted in placing him in ridiculous positions.

As an example, he told of going on one occasion with the Coroner to prospect for a dead body reported to be lying in an old tunnel. The Coroner entered the tunnel, which proved to be a very long one, while Mark remained outside to await results. Presently the official reappeared with one arm of the unknown dead man. In trying to drag out the decomposed body the limb had become detached. Intent upon business, the Coroner returned and brought out a leg, and so he continued the work until he accumulated at the mouth of the tunnel a pile of "remains" sufficient to justify him in holding an inquest and so earning his fee. Mark made the whole business as shocking and disgusting as possible.

A man who had at some time and in some way offended Mark was elected Justice of the Peace in Humboldt County. Mark got up a story of a petrified human body having been found out there under the roots of a pine tree of great size and age. After a full description of the appearance of the body and the place in which it was discovered, Mark brought in the Justice of the Peace and made him insist upon holding an inquest — in short, endowed him with the wisdom of a donkey.

Virginia City was booming when Artemus Ward arrived to deliver his lecture. Comstockers received Artemus as a brother, and he seemed as much at home as if he had all his life been a resident of Virginia City. He remained on the Comstock several days, making the *Enterprise* his head-

quarters. Mark Twain and I had the pleasure of showing him the town, and a real pleasure it was – a sort of circus, in fact – as he constantly overflowed with fun. He was anxious to get hold of the lingo and style of the miners, and we made him acquainted with several old forty-niners. The greetings among these men struck him as something new, and he began practicing, playing himself off as an old-timer. The looks of astonishment which his efforts in this line called up in some quarters soon showed him that the half-horse half-alligator style of greeting was only good with a certain class. Mark Twain had a weakness for the clergy, and meeting one of his preacher friends on the street one day he introduced him to Ward without adding to the name the handle of "Reverend." Some twinkle in the eye of the reverend gentleman caused Artemus to think him one of the "old boys," so he greeted him with: "Well, old Two-Pan-One-Color, is the devil still in your dough-dish?"

Mark hastened to explain, and it all ended in a laugh, in which Ward joined very faintly.

Artemus Ward was full of curiosity about the Piute Indians and the Chinese. While he was here the Chinese had a pow-wow of some kind. A big tent was erected on a vacant lot in Chinatown, in which half a dozen yellow and purple-robed priests from San Francisco displayed their gods and received the vows of the faithful. One night Mark, Ward and I "took in" this show and other Chinatown sights. We went to see Hop Sing, head of one company, and old Salt Sing, the champion of the opposition company. Both insisted upon our testing various fiery drinks, such as rice "blandly" and other kinds of "blandly."

We narrowly escaped being caught in the midst of a fight that started between the rival companies, a fight in which about fifty shots were fired, killing one man and wounding two or three.

In returning to the city from Chinatown we concluded to take a "near cut." Coming to a string of low frame houses, Artemus said the nearest cut was over the tops of the shanties, and crying "Follow your leader!" mounted a shed and then the roof of a house. "Come ahead," cried he, "and we'll go up into town over the roofs of the houses. Follow your leader."

The "China brandy" was venturesome – no wonder the Celestials fought – and soon we were all marching along over the roofs. We had not proceeded far before there came to our ears the command, "Halt there or I shoot," and we saw a man with a shotgun leveled at us. The man who had halted us was a watchman. He held his gun on us until we climbed down and marched up to him as ordered. Explanations followed and all was right as soon as our names were given.

"Right you are," said Artemus. "Take a few tickets and come to my show," and he poked over the fence to the man a handful of tickets.

"Thanks," said the watchman, and reaching behind into the tail of a long coat he drew forth a bottle that was almost as long as the barrel of his gun. "Good stuff," said he, as he poked the long bottle over the fence to us.

Mark and I feared to mix fighting American whisky with warlike Chinese "brandy," but Artemus took the bottle, and as he placed it to his lips and elevated it toward the North Star it looked like a telescope. "Splendid," said he, as he lowered the "instrument."

After this adventure we concluded to go to our rooms on B street and all three turn into our big bed together, "three saints," as Artemus put it, "Mark, Luke and John." However, in going up Sutton avenue there was heard "a sound of revelry by night." We were passing a huge barn of a building in which a couple of hurdy-gurdies were holding forth. Hurdies were something new to Ward, and he said he wanted to see this show.

On entering the dance hall Artemus announced our arrival by stating that we were "Babes in the Wood." As he was known by sight to most of those present there were at once "Cheers for Artemus Ward."

"Now," said Ward, "we three have got to have a dance together. It'll be a thing our offspring to the furthest generation will be proud of!"

So electing three stalwart and capable girls as partners we danced to the unbounded admiration of a large and enthusiastic audience, headed by "Kettle-belly" Brown.

Artemus threw a twenty-dollar gold piece on the bar to pay for the dances and beer. The bartender took out about four times the usual rates

and was raking Ward's double eagle into the till when "Kettle's" big hand came down upon the gold with a startling spat.

"No you don't!" said "Kettle," – "these gentlemen are friends of mine. This twenty don't go into the till until you hand out the right change!" Instantly the correct change was passed over to Ward.

Immediately the whole heart and soul of Artemus Ward went out to "Kettle." Said he to Brown: "We are three mere 'Babes in the Wood;' come along with us. We need you to take care of us."

So instead of going to bed we went forth under the guidance of the genial "Kettle." We went to hear the Cornish singers, and to see some of the big games, meeting with still further adventures in our wanderings, but everywhere fathered and guarded by the bulky, whole-souled and honest old Sonora miner, "Kettle-belly" Brown.

The first rays of the morning sun were gilding the peak of Mount Davidson. The "Babes" were out in front of Aaron Hooper's saloon – where happened to be some convenient packing cases – for a mouthful of fresh air. Seated upon one of the boxes Artemus was wrestling with a very active dose of mustard and water given him by the attentive "Kettle."

"You are early abroad, gentlemen," said staid old John A. Collins, out for his morning stroll. We would much preferred at that moment to have seen Beelzebub.

"Yes, Mr. Collins," said Mark, as he saw halted before us the moral patriarch of the Comstock, "it is beautiful to see the sun rise. As the poet says:

" 'Now fair Aurora lifts the golden ray
And all the ruddy Orient flames with day.' "

This little poetical outburst aroused Artemus. Lifting his head, with "Kettle's" assistance, he tearfully gazed up at the great moral reformer and, with much feeling and emphasis, said: " 'A man oppressed, dependent, yet a man!' "

In the old boom times, when we had all the big shows in Virginia City, Adah Isaacs Menken struck the Comstock with her play of "Mazepa." With her came Orpheus C. Kerr, her then husband, and, as a

friend and a guest, Ada Clare, "Queen of the Bohemians." Menken was delighted with the excitement and wild whirl of life as then seen in full swing on the Comstock. She said it was "in keeping with the wild shrieking of the many steam whistles and the thunder of the quartz mills."

She was taken through the lower levels of the mines, made an honorary member of Young America Engine Company No. 2, and presented a belt bearing the name of the company in large letters of solid silver bullion. She "took in" everything that was going, became smitten with the prevailing rage for speculating in mining stocks, and had half a notion to settle down on the Comstock and stay with the many congenital excitements in which Virginia City abounded.

"The Menken" at that time had half a mind to leave the stage and turn her attention to literature. She wrote for the *Enterprise* two or three poems – long ones in blankest of blank verse – and contemplated a realistic novel. Her bosom friend Ada Clare, on the contrary, thought of abandoning literature and taking to the stage.

Menken was very impulsive and full of all manner of notions and eccentricities. While here she took it into her head to give a big dinner, to which but four persons should sit down. These four were to be herself, Ada Clare, Mark Twain and myself. Even Orpheus Kerr, her husband, was barred from the entertainment, a thing he apparently did not much relish.

The dinner was given in the Menken's rooms at the International Hotel. She kept a whole procession of waiters moving up and down the two flights of stairs between the kitchen and her rooms, many courses being no more than tasted before they were removed.

It seemed a little rough on Orpheus, glimpses of whom we caught as he patrolled the hall outside the rooms, that he should have only a smell of the good things as they were carried past him. For some reason he was just then in bad odor with his more energetic half.

The object of the dinner appeared to be, on Menken's part, a sort of literary consultation. She was full of her proposed novel. Aside from this talk, and some talk of getting up a new play for Clare, the dinner was rather dull. It was thought to enliven the occasion with:

Short swallow flights of song, that dip
Their wings . . . and skim away.

But the Menken was no nightingale, Clare was a sort of wren, and I was a screech owl. Mark enchanted us with his one and only song of:

There was an old horse and his name was Jerusalem.
And he came from Jerusalem,
And he went to Jerusalem.
There was an old horse . . .

And so on *ad infinitum*.

In the room were about nineteen dogs of as many breeds, "mongrel, puppy, whelps and hound, and curs of low degree," some Ada Clare's pets and others belonging to the Menken. These pampered beasts the pair continually fed upon cubes of sugar soaked in brandy and champagne. This provender made the animals howlingly hilarious, to the great delight of their mistresses, but to the disgust of Twain, who was seated on Menken's side of the table, where the canine carnival was most rampant.

Presently one of the dogs took an unwarranted liberty with Mark's leg. Guessing at the whereabouts of the cur under the table, Mark undertook to avenge the nip he had received with a sly kick. He missed the dog but hit the Menken's pet corn, causing her to bound from her seat, throw herself on a lounge and roll and roar in agony.

This mischance put a sort of damper on the festivities. Mark immediately became as sullen as if it had been his own corn that was wounded, and even when Menken came limping back to her chair and begged him not to mind, he refused to be conciliated.

Mark disliked the Menken and would have avoided the arrangement that seated him by her side had it been possible.

After this mishap nothing could propitiate Mark. He very soon imagined a pressing engagement and begged to be excused. As we took our departure we passed Orpheus, still on patrol duty in the hall. He was not in a good humor and scowled and muttered in reply to our salutations.

Thus tamely and unsatisfactorily ended our big dinner.

Of those who composed that dinner party only Twain and I remain above the sod. Ada Clare (Mrs. Ada Agnes Noyes) was bitten January 30, 1874, by her pet black and tan dog and died of hydrophobia in New York, a month later. The dog bit and shockingly mangled her nose. She was born in Charleston, S.C., and was a little over thirty-five when she died. She was a pretty, petite blonde, with a wealth of fluffy golden hair. Her first novel was titled *Only a Woman's Heart*, but her reputation was mainly due to her spicy short sketches. Adah Isaacs Menken died in Paris in June, 1868, and was buried in Pere-la-Chaise.



Elected to Membership

The two classifications of membership above Regular Membership are Patron Memberships, \$125 a year, and Sustaining Memberships, \$50 a year.

NEW SUSTAINING MEMBER	ADDRESS	SPONSOR
Allen Butler	Dallas, Texas	Membership Committee

The following member has transferred from Regular to Sustaining Membership:

John Scopazzi San Francisco

The following have been elected to membership since the publication of the *Winter News-Letter*:

NEW MEMBERS	ADDRESS	SPONSOR
Douglas Bullis	Ross	Don Greame Kelley
Dan Dozier	Washington, D.C.	Gaye L. Kelly
Thomas M. Fante	Sacramento	Ethel Crockett
Neal Ferguson	Menlo Park	Peter Stansky
Nancy H. Filter	San Francisco	Richard Hilkert
Cynthia Groobey	Carmel	Membership Committee
Matt Hedley	San Mateo	Membership Committee
Craig W. Jensen	Provo, Utah	Brigham Young University Library
T. Peter Kraus	New York, New York	Bernard M. Rosenthal
Michael S. Meyer	Novato	Membership Committee
Alice A. Morison	San Mateo	David Myrick
Patricia H. Myers	Los Gatos	Membership Committee
Christopher J. McClellan	San Rafael	Richard C. Otter
Mrs. John F. Robles	Tucson, Arizona	David Myrick
Mrs. J. Kenneth Sexton	Willows	Warren R. Howell
Wilda D. Shock	Davis	Michael Harrison
Jorge Skinner-Klee	Guatemala, Guatemala	Membership Committee
Richard Neil Snyder	Mill Valley	Richard Hilkert
A. W. Stone	Villa Park	James Lorson
Jeffrey Thompson	Fairfax	Don Greame Kelley
Ms. Jay Van Yzerlooy	Oakland	Membership Committee
Allen B. Veaner	Goleta	Membership Committee
Ann Whipple	Oakland	Dorothy Whitnah
Pacific Union Club Library	San Francisco	Membership Committee

The Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of The Book Club of California will be held at the Club rooms, 312 Sutter Street, Suite 510, San Francisco, on Tuesday, March 17, 1981, at 11:30 a.m.

GAYE KELLY

Executive Director

Gifts & Acquisitions

David S. Wirshup of Anacapa Books in Berkeley has kindly sent the Club a copy of an attractive booklet which he recently published, William Everson's *On Hand Printing*, which consists of two letters written in the late 1940's to Dick Underwood. They provide a fund of information about Everson's views concerning letterpress printing, particularly the desirability of printing on dampened paper and handpress printing as opposed to printing done on a cylinder press. The booklet was designed and printed by Alastair Johnston and 300 copies were printed of which ours is number 73. Our thanks to Mr. Wirshup for this thoughtful gift.

Herman Cohen of the Chiswick Book Shop in Sandy Hook, Connecticut has most generously given us a copy of the definitive bibliography of the Officina Bodoni translated into English by Hans Schmoller, which he has just published, Giovanni Mardersteig's *The Officina Bodoni, an Account of the Work of a Hand Press, 1923-1977*. The proprietor of the press, Giovanni Mardersteig, wrote a substantial portion of the book before his death in 1977. The text was completed by his widow Irmi and his son Martino.

Mr. Schmoller edited the volume and also wrote the introduction. There are 198 titles listed with detailed descriptions, and 116 reproductions of specimen pages which illustrate types, binding styles, and even the thirteen versions of the pressmark. In addition Charles Malin, the last of the great type punchcutters, supplies some reminiscences while Hans Schmoller recreates a lively picture of Mardersteig's life and friendships with scores of famous people in literature and the arts. This is an impressive record of the Officina Bodoni, one of the truly important private presses of our time. It will be shelved with the catalogue of the exhibit held at the King's Library in the British Library shortly before Giovanni Mardersteig's death. As a final note, our readers may want to be reminded of the article by John Dreyfus,

"The Work of Giovanni Mardersteig," which appeared in the Quarterly, Vol. 37, No. 2, Winter 1971. Our warm thanks to Mr. Cohen for this very handsome gift.

Arlen and Clare Philpott have sent us with their compliments a good example of their poetry printing, *Subject to Turbulence*, Selected Poems, by Christopher Humble, which they printed in 1979 at their Tamal Land Press in Fairfax. This will find a happy place in our collection of fine Western printing and our thanks to the Philpotts.

We have received a new miniature book printed by Member Lester Lloyd, *The Gettysburg Address*, printed in a 4-point sans serif type, the smallest ever cut for commercial use in America. This *tour de force* was printed and bound by Lester and his wife Mildred at their Red Squirrel Press in Lafayette. The book was printed in an edition of 150 copies of which ours is number 36. Since little books are difficult to house, the printers created a stout folder with the book inset in a cut-out aperture. Many thanks to them both.

William Morris collector and Member Jack Walsdorf of Oregon sent us the third and latest augmented catalogue of his great collection. It is entitled *William Morris in Private Press and Limited Editions* and was produced by the University of Missouri, Kansas City, which displayed this very interesting collection. The catalogue will be shelved next to that of our other great Morris collector, Member Sandy Berger.

Mrs. David Potter, our House Committee Chairperson, has given us another welcome gift from her father's library, a fine copy of the Grabhorn Press edition of *Wah-To-Yah, The Taos Trail*, issued in 1936. Curiously, the Club has never owned a copy of this book which both Robert Grabhorn and Sherwood Grover considered one of the best of the Grabhorn Rare Americana series. Our thanks to Mrs. Potter for her gift of this attractive book.

Our distinguished Member Laurence Clark Powell has sent us with his good wishes a copy of his recent publication *My Mozart Commonplace Book* which was privately printed for him in an edition of 300 copies by Richard J. Hoffman. The book is charmingly designed and very well printed and we are delighted to have a copy.

Through the good offices of the Libraries of the Claremont Colleges the Club has received a copy of their imposing volume on *The Herbert Clark Hoover*

Collection of Mining & Metallurgy printed in 1980 by Andrew Hoyem's Arion Press in an edition of 500 copies. This notable collection was presented to The Honnold Library by Herbert Hoover, Jr. in 1970 and augmented the engineering and metallurgy collections of William Honnold and Harvey Mudd, both close friends of former President Hoover. The Club is grateful to have a copy of the book and our thanks to the Claremont Colleges.

We have received an interesting pamphlet from the Alcuin Society of Vancouver. It is *The Printing of Music 1480-1680* by J. Evan Kreider, printed in an edition of 610 copies of which ours is number 105. This well documented and illustrated essay is a welcome addition to the Club's library and our thanks to the Alcuin Society.

Lewis and Dorothy Allen have very generously given the Club a copy of their recently printed *Allen Press Bibliography*. By any standards, this must be considered one of the most beautiful books of the press. Not only that, it is the last large book they will print since their Columbian Press will go to the University of Utah Library, leaving them with only their smaller Albion. The bibliography sold out very quickly even at \$300 so we are all the more grateful to have received a copy.

The Stanford University Libraries sent us a copy of their Annual Report for 1979-1980. The listing of donors and gifts during that period is impressive. One of the highlights is a gift of a vellum copy, one of 40, of the Ashendene Press edition of *The Song of Songs* with exquisite hand illumination by the gifted Florence Kingford who later became the wife of Sydney Cockerell. This was a generous gift from Irving Robbins to supplement his original gift of Ashendene Press books and ephemera. There are, however, many other gifts as admirable and enviable. The Report was designed by Ann Rosener in her usual highly capable fashion.

Toni Savage of Leicester, England, has sent us the latest of his incomparable broadsheets which are now up to number 185. He also sent the first in a new series in conjunction with Martin Carthy, "Slip No. 1." In addition he sent two new charming booklets. The first is *Which Hot Ghost will Whisper & The Still Centre*, two poems by Arthur Caddick with drawings by Kathie Layfield. The edition of 100 was printed on paper hand-made by Tim Powell; ours is copy 66. The second is *Sketches of Venice* with delightful pen sketches by Kathie Layfield. This was also printed in an edition of 100 copies, signed by

the artist, and ours is copy 52. The Club is pleased to own a growing collection of these exciting and original examples of this noteworthy private press. Our sincere thanks to Toni Savage and his New Broom Press.

The Club Library has acquired the last word on the elusive story of the Gregynog Press in *A History of the Gregynog Press* by Dorothy A. Harrop and published by the Private Libraries Association in 1980. Many earlier booklets have been done on this famous Welsh press but this is by far the most thorough study. It is illustrated throughout and contains a complete bibliography as well as an exhaustive checklist of the ephemera. This is a welcome addition to our reference and bibliography collection.

We have acquired an example of a rare form of stereotyping by the Stanhope method printed in 1807 by Andrew Wilson of London. It is an early example of a method we have been searching for and nicely fills a gap in our now important collection of stereotype printing. The title is *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* by Sterne. Of additional interest is a note immediately following the title page containing the Standing Rules of the Stereotype Office which Updike later reproduced in his *Printing Types*.

We have purchased two more Thomas Bewick items. The first is a rare original Burdekin sheet published by R. Burdekin at High Ousegate, York, circa 1805. The second and most important is a copy of *Ten Drawing Reproductions shown with Impressions of the Corresponding Engravings* printed by the Cherryburn Press of Chicago in 1972. It is an excellent example of R. Hunter Middleton's expertise in printing Bewick engravings which he accomplishes with wonderful fidelity. All of the engravings are matted with a facsimile of the original drawing for the engraving. They are housed in a boxed slipcase. This work must be seen to be properly appreciated which now is possible at the Club rooms.

Serendipity

Member Richard H. Dillon's next-to-latest book, *High Steel*, published by Celestial Arts in Millbrae, has just won a Certificate of Recognition in the Book Show of the Bookbuilders West competition for 1980. The award recognizes the superior design and execution of the book rather than the

prose of ex-President Dillon but he enjoys this recognition nevertheless and is grateful to Abigail Johnston and the other talented people at Celestial Arts.

John Henry Nash, San Francisco printer extraordinaire, is the subject of the exhibit from February through April in the Donohue Rare Book Room, Richard A. Gleeson Library, University of San Francisco. The exhibit is in honor of Mr. & Mrs. Norman H. Strouse of St. Helena who recently donated their unique collection of Nash to the Gleeson Library. Featured are books, pamphlets, proofs, and printed ephemera selected from more than 1100 items in the collection. The hours of the Rare Book Room are 9-12 and 1-4 Monday through Friday and on Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 9:30.

"Before 1500 in the Bancroft Library," featuring Egyptian papyri, Medieval and Renaissance manuscripts and incunabula is an exhibit at The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, which will be on display through May 22, 1981. Library hours: Monday through Friday 9 to 5; Saturday 1 to 5.

An exhibition of individual and collaborative works in clay and handmade paper by Kathryn Clark, Marjorie Levy, and Margaret Prentice will be shown at Meyer Breier Weiss Gallery from February 17 through March 21, 1981.

Kathryn Clark and Margaret Prentice began to work in handmade paper in 1969. In 1972 they moved to Indiana to found Twinrocker Handmade Paper and the Purdue Center for Research in Handmade Paper. Marjorie Levy is on leave from the faculty of Purdue University and presently affiliated with the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, California.

Meyer Breier Weiss Gallery is located in Building A, Fort Mason Center, San Francisco. Gallery hours: Tuesday-Saturday 11:00-5:00.

Seeking the Elephant, 1849 - James Mason Hutchings' Journal of his Overland Trek to California, Including his Voyage to America, 1848 and Letters from the Mother Lode has been published by The Arthur H. Clark Company. It was edited with an introduction by Shirley Sargent, who is the author of numerous books including our recent publication *A Western Journey with Mr. Emerson*. The book was designed by Grant Dahlstrom and printed at Castle Press in Pasadena, California in an edition limited to 750 copies. The text is accompanied by two illustrations and index. The price is \$30.00. For further information, contact the publisher, Box 230, Glendale, CA 91209.

James A. Silverman is compiling a bibliography of California children's books, 1836-1936. The bibliographic scope includes all childrens' books and magazines published in this state during the century following Zamorano's *Tablas para los niños que empiezen a contar* (1836). The focus of the project is to shed light on distinguishing qualities of the publications for children designed for regional distribution. This study investigates the importation of cultural traditions and development of regional identities. Research into California imprints has also located significant childrens' books about California published elsewhere in America, Britain, and Europe. The non-California imprints will be listed secondarily and considered for the image of California they portrayed before 1869. Individuals interested in details of this study or wishing to contribute to the bibliography are requested to contact: James A. Silverman, 1200 Taylor Street, Apartment 16, San Francisco, California 94108.

Help wanted: We lack photographs of the interior and exterior of the Grabhorn's shops on Kearny St. and Powell St. for our upcoming publication of a biography of the Grabhorns by Roby Wentz. The Club would like to beg, borrow or steal any photos of any size. Please contact the Club as soon as possible.

Dimitri Shipounoff



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